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tenth special session

Letter dated 24 October 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Chairperson of the First Committee

I have the honour to bring to your attention the concern of this Permanent Mission about the English-language publication *Implementing Resolution 1540: The Role of Regional Organizations*, edited by Lawrence Scheinman and published under the auspices of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). This publication was introduced at the side event organized by UNIDIR in connection with the work of the First Committee, held at the United Nations in Conference Room 4 on 22 October 2008.

In this regard I should like to express our disagreement with a number of irresponsible and unfounded claims made in chapter 2, entitled "Resolution 1540 in Latin America and the role of the Organization of American States".

On page 15 it is stated that several countries of the region, including the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, "are countries where mechanisms to avoid access to nuclear facilities and materials and chemical and biological agents by non-state actors involved in violent tactics are definitely needed". In our view, this totally baseless and false information does not take into account the measures which the Venezuelan Government has adopted to implement the provisions of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

Moreover, on page 18 there is an irresponsible reference to alleged terrorist networks in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, specifically on Margarita Island. It is asserted that "Other areas of concern in the region are ... Margarita Island in Venezuela ...". We are deeply concerned that statements of this kind have been made in the complete absence of any responsible, reliable information sources, meaning that they are in the realm of speculation.

Furthermore, on page 22, table 2 ("Total percentage of fulfilment of key obligations") assigns an arbitrary percentage to our country's fulfilment of



resolution 1540 (2004). The percentage is based on figures taken from another source, with no explanation of the methodology used to calculate it.

This Mission considers that the false statements contained in the above-mentioned chapter call into question the commitment of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to implement resolution 1540 (2004), which we regard as an important instrument for international efforts to combat terrorism.

We recognize the achievements and the important work of UNIDIR in disarmament and non-proliferation education. Nonetheless, it is disturbing that a biased opinion with no scientific basis has been included in a publication of that prestigious Institute, whose reputation could even be affected by this circumstance.

I should be grateful if you would use your good offices to transmit these comments to UNIDIR.

We hope that situations of this kind do not recur in the future. To that end, we ask for your valuable collaboration in continuing to strengthen dialogue and cooperation among States with a view to promoting the objective of disarmament.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela welcomes the holding of side events in the context of the First Committee's work, as they afford opportunities to broaden the Member States' knowledge and information on various topics of considerable interest. In this regard, we regret that the gathering at which this publication was unveiled was not in keeping with the nature of these events.

This Permanent Mission would be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 91.

(Signed) Jorge Valero
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela